



PRESS RELEASE

City of Yonkers Police Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE #2021-0016

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Yonkers Police Arrest, Charge Driver in Motor Vehicle Accident; Hero Cops and Bystanders Save Infant and Mother

Yonkers, NY – On Friday, July 23rd, 2021 at approximately 8:30AM, members of the Yonkers Police Department responded to 124 Lake Avenue on a motor vehicle accident. An individual operating a 2005 Hyundai Elantra was traveling northbound on Morningside Avenue and turned westbound onto Lake Avenue. While doing so, the operator struck a curb, a parked vehicle, two pedestrians, and then continued to accelerate into the storefront of a barbershop at that location.

4th Precinct Officers Fusco and Samoyedny were in a nearby bagel shop getting breakfast when they heard the collision and went to investigate, finding a pedestrian down in the wreckage of the crash inside the barber shop. The officers came to realize that in addition to the adult female pedestrian, her infant daughter was also injured and was trapped under the vehicle. The officers with the help of bystanders heroically **LIFTED THE VEHICLE** off of the baby so she could be rescued and given medical aid. The officers then rendered medical aid to both victims while requesting the necessary additional resources to the scene. The pedestrians were found to be a 36 year old female along with her 8-month-old infant daughter; their identities will not be released at this time. The mother sustained a serious femur fracture and the infant sustained a skull fracture along with 3rd degree burns to her back and foot. Both the mother and the infant were transported to a local trauma center where they are still being treated but are expected to survive their injuries. The owner of the barber shop sustained a minor laceration. No other injuries were reported.

Detectives from the Major Case Squad, Crime Scene Unit, and Digital Forensics Unit, as well as Officers from the Accident Investigation Unit were called to the scene to investigate. The operator of the vehicle was detained at scene, as was a female passenger found to be in the vehicle. Neither sustained any reported injuries. The investigation ultimately yielded that the operator had a suspended license; the vehicle he was operating was properly registered to a Yonkers resident. Investigators further found an alcoholic beverage in the vehicle. Due to the nature of the incident, a test was conducted to determine the alcohol/drug content of the vehicle operator's blood.

The operator was identified as DAVID PONCURAK, a 43-year-old resident of Yonkers. After a lengthy investigation, PONCURAK was placed under arrest and charged with Driving While Intoxicated, Vehicular Assault 2nd, and Aggravated Unlicensed Operation 2nd. He is being held overnight in the Yonkers City Jail awaiting arraignment tomorrow morning.

Media Contact: Sergeant Frank DiDomizio

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Police Commissioner John J. Mueller stated, “It is always a tragedy when someone is injured by the reckless and criminal acts of another person, and that is only amplified when those injured include an infant. Luckily, two veteran officers of Yonkers’ Finest just happened to be getting breakfast next door and quickly took action along with members of the community to rescue a child trapped under the vehicle and render aid to her mother. The actions taken are nothing short of heroic. The individual arrested in this incident will now have to face the consequences of his alleged behavior.”

The City of Yonkers and Yonkers Police Department wish the victims of this incident a speedy recovery.

NOTE: Booking charges are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law. ###

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